



2005 Citi California Community Colleges Commission on Athletics

Men's Volleyball Championships Moorpark (CA) College

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Championship Semifinal #1: Palomar, 3-0, Santa Barbara City (25-17, 25-22, 25-13)

MOORPARK, CA – Avenging an earlier inter-conference defeat, the upstart Palomar College Comets advanced to Saturday's state championship match with a 3-0 victory over the Santa Barbara City College (SBCC) Vaqueros Friday at Raider Pavilion on the campus of Moorpark College.

SBCC, one of four Western State Conference (WSC) regular season champions along with tournament host Moorpark College, Long Beach City College and Santa Monica College at 7-3, had difficulty getting into its game against the Comets, the champions of the Orange Empire Conference (OEC) at 8-2. The Vaqueros defeated Palomar, 3-0, March 9, but the Comets were ready this time.

SBCC (13-5) led, 2-0, 5-2, before the Comets came to life behind opposite hitter Kevin McColloch (La Costa Canyon H.S.). McColloch registered a kill – one of a match-high 15 he would have on the night to get the Comets to 6-7. In came Girten behind the service line and by the time he left, Palomar led, 12-7, and was on its way. Middle blocker Jonathon Thomas sandwiched kills for points 23 & 25 around an attack error by SBCC's Geoffrey Berz (Foothill H.S.).

In game two, Berz was serving as the Vaqueros came to within, 24-22, on three Palomar attack errors, but sophomore Colin Robertson had a long attack and Palomar won, 25-22. In game three, SBCC had no answer for Palomar as the Comets turned a 12-11 margin into a 24-13 cushion. Leading, 16-12, the Comets parlayed six kills into a 22-12 lead. Sophomore outside hitter Armen Zakarian (El Cerrito H.S.) had his attack from the back row travel too far and the Comets (12-5) won the match.

For SBCC, sophomore opposite hitter Colin Robertson (San Marcos H.S.) had eight kills and freshman setter Patrick Heyne (Buchanan H.S.) had 24 assists.

"Palomar played great defense tonight," said SBCC head coach Melody Parker whose Vaqueros were making their first post-season appearance since a semifinal loss to Orange Coast in 2002. "We lined up differently and we were completely off. Our strategy in the third game was to run a faster offense, but Palomar was ready. We had a good season, but Palomar deserved to win, added Parker."

Semifinal #2: Moorpark, 3-1, Irvine Valley (25-19, 25-15, 23-25, 25-20)

MOORPARK, CA – Tournament host Moorpark College kept its date with destiny with a 3-1 win with over Orange Empire Conference runner-up Irvine Valley College (IVC) Friday night.

Moorpark started fast as freshman outside hitter Ryan Upmeyer (Royal H.S.) was at the service line as Moorpark opened a 6-0 lead in game one and was never headed. In game two, Upmeyer started service and logged two aces as Moorpark led, 4-0.

In game three, IVC led briefly and trailed, 9-4, before catching Moorpark at 12 apiece. In was battle from that point as neither team led by more than one point until the end when the Lasers logged a 25-23 win. In game four, IVC (10-8) came within 20-19 before the host Raiders (with their raucous crowd of 300 behind them) pulled away and won, 25-20.

Sophomore outside hitter/middle blocker Virgil Ecoffey (Channel Islands H.S.) garnered four kills in each of the first two games and five in the third en route to a match-high 16 kills for the victorious Raiders (13-4). Moorpark freshman outside hitter Sean Sharpe (Moorpark H.S.) had 15 kills. Sophomore setter Jeremy Scharf (Royal H.S.) logged 45 assists. IVC sophomore opposite hitter Sean Nicholson (Mission Viejo H.S.) led the Lasers with 15 kills and sophomore setter Bryce Baum (Dana Hills H.S.) had 29 assists.

With the win, Moorpark makes its first trip to the finals in the four-year history of the program and is trying to be the first host to win the state championship since Los Angeles Pierce hosted and won it all in 1986. Palomar is also seeking its first state crown and is making its first trip to the state final since 1995.